

FILE NO. 5:21-CV-00225-BO

Plaintiff,

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
SAFETY, et al.,

DECLARATION  
OF  
ERIK A. HOOKS

Case 5:21-cv-00225-BO Document 56-4 Filed 05/17/23 Page 1 of 3

responsible for overseeing the various agencies in my control. However, each agency had its own hierarchy of staff members that were responsible for the management of their respective agencies.

4. At the relevant time Reuben Young was serving as the Interim Chief Deputy Secretary for Adult Corrections and Juvenile Justice.

5. Reuben Young was the hiring manager for the Central Prison Hospital CEO position ("CEO Position) posted on August 7, 2018.

6. Upon information and belief, and as stated in his affidavit, Reuben Young decided to hire Chad Lovett for the CEO position based on the recommendation from the interview panel for the CEO Position, the application materials for all applicants and Dr. Wilson's memorandum.

7. Reuben Young obtained my approval, as Secretary of DPS, to hire Mr. Lovett for the CEO Position.

8. As Secretary, I was not directly involved in the hiring process for the CEO position but relied on Reuben Young as the hiring manager to provide me with a recommendation.

9. Upon information and belief, Mr. Lovett was offered the position and he accepted.

10. Judith Knechtges was not selected for the CEO Position because she was not the most qualified.

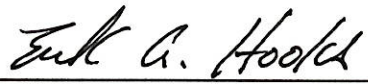
11. The decision not to hire Judith Knechtges for the CEO Position was not retaliatory or otherwise based on her reporting of: fraud, violations of law or regulation,

misappropriation of State resources, dangers to the public health and safety, gross mismanagement, a gross waste of monies, or gross abuse of authority.

FURTHER THE DECLARANT SAYETH NOT.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746(2), I verify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing Declaration is true and correct in substance and in fact to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Respectfully submitted this the 17th day of May, 2023.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Erik A. Hooks